



First Steps Bulletin

Date February 23, 2009
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**Topic: ED Team Member Protocol for
Attending IFSP Meeting via the Phone**

Bulletin Number: 02232009



During the past year as Eligibility Determination Teams (ED Team) get busier, it has become more difficult for members to attend the Eligibility/IFSP Meeting face to face. Many ED Teams dedicate only a few days a week to this job, balancing the rest of the week to serving ongoing children where they do not have ED Team responsibilities. The Bureau of Child Development Services (BCDS) has recognized the importance of the Lead ED Team member participating in the determination of eligibility and development of the IFSP with the family and other team members. Because of this, the BCDS has developed a protocol for these members of the IFSP team to participate other than the traditional face to face meeting and seek reimbursement for their time.

An ED Team member may attend the IFSP meeting via the family's home phone or SC cell phone, if the family is comfortable with using the phone, to provide input to the rest of the team for the development of the IFSP outcomes and strategies. The family must give permission at least one week prior to the scheduled Eligibility/IFSP Meeting. The discussion must be documented in the meeting minutes, stating the ED Team member will be calling to participate in the meeting. This form of meeting may not be used as a general rule to participate but when there is a scheduling conflict and a face to face meeting with the team cannot be accommodated. When an ED Team member is contemplating phoning into the meeting, these guidelines must be considered:

- The Lead ED Team member must contact the Intake/Service Coordinator (SC) to discuss the phone in process at least 10 days before the scheduled meeting. The family may not incur any long distance phone charges.
- The Intake/SC will contact the family to seek their approval for the Lead ED Team member to attend the IFSP meeting via the phone. The family must give approval at least one week prior to the meeting date.
- The Intake/SC will notify the Lead ED Team member that the family has approved their participation via the phone and will confirm the date, time and phone number they will be calling into during the meeting. This will allow for agenda planning; accommodate phone conference technology planning and the dissemination of all appropriate reports to all team members. All steps of communication must be well documented in the Intake/SC logs between all IFSP team members.

- The Lead ED Team member must know what time the meeting will start to enable the call to take place. The time must be listed on the meeting agenda. This form of meeting attendance may not be used as a last resort but must be well planned in advance.

- The ED Team member calling in may not be doing anything else that is billable and must be in a confidential location. They cannot be on the computer doing other work while participating in the meeting. Your **full attention** must be the family and the meeting. ED Team member will document on a Face to Face form their time along with notes from the phone call including outcomes, questions/concerns, strategies, and future follow up needed. You may not be driving. The Lead ED Team member may bill for the meeting at the IFSP Meeting on-site rate. This method of attendance is limited to 3 units per IFSP meeting.

- The SC will list them as attending via phone and the ED Team member will bill the on-site rate for IFSP Meeting.

- The ED Team member may not call in for just “their part” but participate during the entire meeting with the exception of Cost Participation, review of rights, and signing of forms/documents.

- As with the face to face meeting, another ED Team member whom has not seen the child for the assessment activity will not be allowed to attend the IFSP meeting as a substitute.

The SPOE will be monitoring how often this method is being utilized and will report to the State quarterly. If this method of IFSP participation is abused, the BCDS may mandate that one ED Team member attend the Eligibility/IFSP meeting face to face.